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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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January 12, 2016
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Bills Aiding Foster Children Pass State Senate

Madison, WI... Today, the Wisconsin Senate passed 3 bills authored by Senator Jerry Petrowski (*R-Marathon*) in consultation with the Department of Children and Families. These bills streamline and improve crucial department services for children in out-of-home care.

The bills require the Department of Children and Families to establish a reasonable and prudent parenting standard for foster parents to utilize. This standard allows care providers and foster parents to simply weigh the benefits and risks for a child before allowing them to participate in after-school or social activities.

“Currently, there is a very lengthy process for children in out-of-home care to seek approval just for something as simple as attending a school field trip with their classmates,” said Senator Petrowski. “The new standard gives foster parents the flexibility to make these decisions for the direct benefit of the child.”

Additionally, the legislation streamlines the process for a foster guardian to designate a successor in the case of the original guardian’s death or incapacitation. Currently, only an interim caretaker can be named in the event of guardian’s sudden death. This interim caretaker must go through the lengthy and time-consuming process of becoming a licensed foster parent.

“In the event of a guardian’s unexpected death, it is important at that difficult time to ensure stability in the life of the child,” said Senator Petrowski. “Having a successor guardian immediately ready to care for the child helps maintain that stability.”

The legislation also makes necessary updates and clarifications to state statute regarding the Department of Children and Families as part of the Red Tape Review Initiative.

Following Senate passage, the bills now head to the State Assembly where they await further action.

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